

**MUSIC REVIEW**

**New York, Birmingham duel by using new compositions**

By **MICHAEL HUEBNER**  
*News staff writer*

Two culturally distinct cities clashed note for note Sunday in an Artburst-sponsored music exchange between the 25-member Birmingham Art Music Alliance and the 90-strong, New York-based Vox Novus.

The organizations, whose missions are to provide performances of new music in their respective cities, showcased three composers each. No winners were declared, but the Southerners showed as much creative moxie as their Yankee counterparts. More, at times.

In his post-romantic "Tears of Dew" for cello and piano, New Yorker Robert Voisey drew inspiration from Middle Eastern modes, but was mostly an unimaginative discourse on a Hebrew pun.

Terry Winter Owens' "Red Shift" is indebted to George Crumb's zodiac music. A modern-day music-of-the-spheres for solo piano, its title suggests the spectral phenomenon at the limits of the universe. Pianist Adam Bowles' presentation created the necessary atmospheric depth. Noah Creshevsky's "Great Performances" engaged a flutist (Donny Ashworth) and cellist (Craig Hultgren) in a clever encounter with recordings of crowd noises, radio broadcasts and commentary.

Of the Alabama works, Dorothy Hindman's solo piano "Forward Looking Back" combined the freedom of Charles Ives with the shimmer of Claude Debussy, without mimicking those composers. Its allure lies with its passion and lyricism, which seem to bound past any stylistic restraints.

James Jensen's picturesque "The New Yorker Songs" was the

★★★

**BAMA/Vox Novus Exchange Concert**

Presented by Artburst  
Sunday

Unitarian Universalist Church

evening's most conventional work, its five songs nearly literal word paintings of magazine poems. It received the evening's best performance, soprano Melanie Williams delivering clear, strong texts with confidence and versatility. Adam Bowles was as sensitive an accompanist as proved a soloist.

Two of Monroe Golden's "Alabama Places" series rounded out the program, the playfully rhythmic and tonally disorienting "Iron Works" building to an out-of-phase tour de force.

Two Artburst events remain before the Unitarian Universalist Church is demolished. Artburst is expected to follow the church to its new facility near Valley Drive and I-65.